

HOW HACKABLE IS YOUR PASSWORD?

THE REAL COST OF DATA BREACHES.



TECH TIPS

By Kelly McNeil, TechBldrs, Inc.

Data breaches are getting worse and happening more frequently, and our password habits aren't helping. Financial information, healthcare, education — no matter how secure the system, nothing is truly safe. What's been happening while you're still logging into Netflix with your old "flyEaglesfly123" password? We're so glad you asked.

Data breaches are happening more often.

It's only August, and there have already been 14 major data breaches in 2019 — on track to eclipse 2018's record year (1 billion records, up from 179 million in 2017). And it's not just small companies being hit: Facebook, Amazon, Google, and Apple have all experienced data breaches. Some notable hacks close to home include Baltimore City (5/7/2019), Philadelphia Courts (5/21/2019), and LabCorp (6/4/2019).

What does this mean in real numbers?

In January of this year, 2.3 billion accounts were found in the Dark Web, their information visible to all. With 4.3 billion people classified as "internet users" by the International Telecommunications Union. 4.3 billion vs. 3.2 billion — if you do the math, do you feel confident in trusting your security to those odds?

Data breaches are getting worse.

More people are online than ever, and more people means more devastating results when a breach occurs. 31 percent of data breach victims later experience identity theft, with a reported \$905 million in

total fraud losses in 2017 in the US alone. It's too expensive to ignore online account security.

Bad password habits are here to stay.

If "123456" if your password, you're not alone — and that's not a good thing. The UK's National Cyber Security Centre analyzed passwords belonging to accounts worldwide that have been breached and found that 23.2 million accounts used this simple-to-crack password. In fact, 40 percent of users still use weak passwords. That's a lot of people who are easy targets for hackers.

The more online accounts you have, the more vulnerable you are.

73 percent of users have the same password for multiple sites, and 33 percent have the same password for all of them. Meaning if you're affected by one data breach, it's possible that a hacker could gain access to every portion of your online life. If you knew there was a chance that a robber had a key to your home, would you change your locks, or would you keep them the same?

(Continued on page 46)

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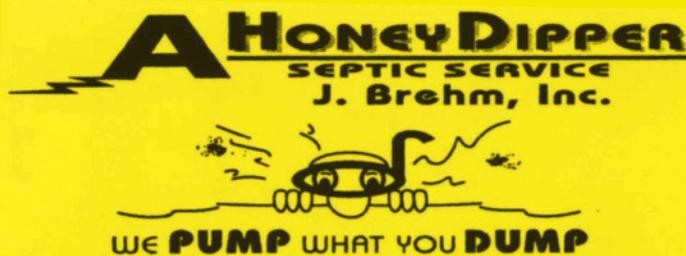
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(Continued from page 45)

But I use a Password Manager. Isn't that safe?

Guess what they found in the 2.3 billion stolen accounts? Lots of long complex passwords. Password managers give you a false sense of security that no one's going to figure it out, but given enough time, a computer can crack any password. And, if you don't change a complex password regularly, you're a sitting duck.

So how can you minimize this risk?

There's only one way, and that is to follow these rules:

- Create a separate password for all your accounts that is 10 or more characters long. When one site gets breached, if you have separate passwords, hackers won't have access to your other accounts.
- Remember all your passwords. Password managers are great for generating passwords, but not changing them. And we often find they lull users into a false sense of security.
- Change your passwords at least once every year. This is the ONLY way to keep your accounts safe.

But can you remember several dozens of passwords without writing it down?

See our "Hackproof Password" method (visit our blog at www.TechBlDrs.com/blog to find it!) to generate secure passwords.

Still worried? Call us at 610.937.0900 for a free cybersecurity assessment for your business, visit our website to learn more about the current cybersecurity landscape, and follow us at [www.Facebook.com/TechBlDrsInc](https://www.facebook.com/TechBlDrsInc) for the latest security news.

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